assistance to Nepal for various projects, education and technical assistance have been continued. India and Nepal exchanged three letters on 16th February, 1993 further liberlising the trade and transit regime between the two countries.

In the cultural area, the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the B.P. Koirala India-Nepal Foundation was held in January 1993 to approve various proposals to strengthen cultural and scholarly ties between India and Nepal.

Discovery of Explosives by Lebanese Coast Guard

1062. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Lebanese coastguard have discovered two India bound ships laden with explosives;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether the manifesto of these two ships have been passed on to Interpol for further investigation;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to stop smuggling of arms and explosives to India through sea route ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) Ministry have seen press reports to this effect. Enquiries have been made with the Lebanese and Cypriot authorities as also the news agency which filed the story. No evidence could be found to confirm the press report.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

(e) Government is vigilant in checking smuggling through the sea route and all law enforcing authorities have been alerted.

Establishing Direct Contacts with Myanmar's Military Junta

1063. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India propose to establish direct contacts with the Myanmar's (Burma) Military Junta; and

(b) if so, what are the details ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) Since the take over of power by the Myanmar Army under the aegis of the State Law and Order Restoration Council in September, 1988, Government have maintained a working relationship with Myanmar. The question of Government proposing to establish direct contacts with the Myanmar Military Junta therefore does not arise.

(b) Does not arise.

Nagotiated Settlement of Kashmir Problem

1064. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that John Major, the British Prime Minister had suggested to Pakistani Prime Minister to start dialogue with India to find a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir problem;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Government;

(c) whether John Major during his visit in last January or at any other time mooted three point peace plan on Kashmir; and